GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:189
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2002
DISTRIBUTION OF FOODGRAINS THROUGH PDS
SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO;SHIVAJI MANE

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the foodgrains being distributed under the Public Distribution System do not reach the intended beneficiaries;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government are aware of the irregularities in distribution of essential provisions under public distribution system;

(d) if so, the steps taken to remove these irregularities;

(e) the States from which the Government have received complaints of shortcomings in the public distribution system; and

(f) the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR)

(a),(b),(c),(d),(e)&(f): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a),(b),(c),(d),(e)&(f) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.189 DUE FOR ANS ON 15-03-2002 IN THE LOK SABHA.

(a)&(b): The Public Distribution System (PDS) is an operation of vast magnitude under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State Governments involving multiple agencies including 4.63 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPSs).The possibility of some leakages in such a system cannot be altogether ruled out. As per a survey conducted by M/s Tata Economic ConsultancyServices (TECS) in 1997, the extent of diversion at the national level was 36% for wheat, 31% for rice and 23% for sugar. Many State Governments, while recognizing that some leakages do take place, have disagreed with the estimates of diversion brought out in the TECS Report.

(c)&(d): In order to make the PDS more effective, efficient and accountable, the following measures have been taken:

(i) The State Governments have been requested to closely monitor the PDS at the FPS and other levels and make arrangements for distribution of PDS commodities in a transparent andaccountable manner by active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the rural areas and local bodies in the urban areas;

(ii) A Model Citizens` Charter has been circulated for adoption by all the States in the country as a measure of social audit;

(iii) The Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 has been issued on 31.8.2001 undersection 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. The Order prohibits any authority or personengaged in the distribution and handling of essential commodities under the PDS to indulge insubstitution or adulteration or diversion of stocks. Any contravention of the provisions of clause 3 (identification of BPL families), clause 4 (ration cards), clause 6 (distribution) and clause 7 (licensing) of the Order is liable to punishment under section 7 of the said Act;

(iv) Senior Officers of the Department of Food and Public Distribution have been designatedas `Area Officers` for various States. These officers periodically visit and monitor the functioning of the PDS in the States allotted to them.

(e)&(f): Since January 2001, 207 complaints have been received from various States/UTsregarding the functioning of the PDS as per details given in the enclosed statement. The complaints, inter alia, relate to non-availability and irregular supply of PDS items at FPSs, overcharging by FPS owners and black-marketing of PDS commodities.Since the responsibility of distribution of Essential Commodities to the consumers under the PDS rests with the StateGovernments, the complaints received are forwarded to the concerned State Governments for appropriate action. Area Officers are deputed to visit the States and personally investigate specific complaints of a serious nature.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (e)&(f) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. 189 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 15-03-2002 IN THE LOK SABHA.

STATEMENT SHOWING THE STATE-WISE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED IN RESPECT OF SHORTCOMINGS PDS SINCE JANUARY 2001.

Sl.No.	Name of the State/UT	No. of complaints received
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2
2.	A&N Islands	1
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	2
4.	Assam	3
5.	Bihar	22
6.	Chattisgarh	2
7	D&N Haveli	2
8.	Delhi	16
9.	Gujarat	6
10.	Haryana	12
11.	Himachal Pradesh	20
12.	Jammu and Kashmir	2
13.	Jharkhand	2
14.	Karnataka	1
15.	Madhya Pradesh	20
16.	Maharashtra	12
17.	Orissa	2
18.	Punjab	18
19.	Rajasthan	25
20.	Uttar Pradesh	26
21.	Uttaranchal	3
22.	West Bengal	8
	Total	207